



Milwaukee County

Board of Supervisors

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Contact: Harold Mester, Public Information Manager 414/278-4051

harold.mester@milwcnty.com

PUBLIC SAFETY IS JOB ONE IN COUNTY BOARD'S ADOPTED BUDGET

Restored positions will keep the community safe

Milwaukee, WI – With a commanding vote of 17-2, the Milwaukee County Board has restored dozens of positions crucial to maintain public safety efforts in the County. The Supervisors are keeping the community safe by restoring \$5 million for prosecution and law enforcement efforts. It's important to note that three officials elected countywide called for these positions to be restored. "District Attorney E. Michael McCann, Sheriff David Clarke, and Chief Judge Kitty Brennan all came to the Finance Committee independently and said on the record that the County Executive's budget would not allow them to fulfill their responsibility in meeting the public service needs of the community," said Finance Committee Chairman Richard Nyklewicz, Jr.

The Board responded, by restoring 11 bailiff positions to provide peace of mind for courthouse visitors, especially jurors. "We in the Courts are very grateful to the County Board," said Chief Judge Kitty Brennan. "For the safety of the public--jurors, witnesses, family members--everyone in this building has to be protected!"

Restored funding for the District Attorney's office means the county will still be able to process criminal cases seven days a week. The County Executive's plan would have cut weekend intake court services. The Board also restored funding for general court staff, to handle a growing workload. The number of small claims court cases has shot up nearly 30% in the last three years.

Milwaukee County District Attorney E. Michael McCann says he was concerned when the County Executive proposed the cuts. "Knowing it would reduce our capabilities to perform our constitutional obligations, I'm very happy the Board saw fit to restore the resources they did. These

resources are critical to the safety of our community,” McCann said. District Attorney-elect John Chisholm agrees. “These funds are absolutely critical for us to function at a minimal level of efficiency. It affects our ability to do justice for victims and the people of Milwaukee County. We’re grateful the Board has restored the funding,” Chisholm said.

Thirty-one Deputy Sheriff positions slated for abolishment have been restored. Milwaukee County Sheriff David Clarke says that will help the Department’s General Investigative Services, Drug Unit, and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area operations. “I refuse to engage in the Chicken Little tactic of screaming that the sky is falling,” said Clarke, commenting on the County Executive’s proposed cuts. “It’s not, nor will it, but these recommendations for lump sum reductions for the fourth consecutive year are at a point where they will have ramifications on the service that we provide and on my ability to carry out my mandated duty to protect.” The Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office patrols the entire Milwaukee County Parks System and the freeway system, along with drug enforcement efforts. Supervisor Ryan McCue said, “On the parks, in the courthouse, and on the freeways, the citizens of Milwaukee County deserve to feel safe, and Walker’s budget could have jeopardized that.”

Supervisor Nyklewicz added, “The Finance Committee and the County Board recognize public safety is the number one priority in establishing the 2007 budget. The lion’s share of property tax dollars restored to the budget went to three key areas: The Courts, the District Attorney’s office, and the Sheriff’s Department.”

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